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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/602,291	06/24/2003	Elizabeth A. Dauch	NEC0252US	1241

33031 7590 04/06/2005

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EXAMINER

GURLEY, LYNNE ANN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2812

DATE MAILED: 04/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Advisory Action Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief	Application No. 10/602,291	Applicant(s) DAUCH ET AL.	
	Examiner Lynne A. Gurley	Art Unit 2812	

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 18 January 2005 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.

1. ☒ The reply was filed after a final rejection, but prior to filing a Notice of Appeal. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:

- a) ☐ The period for reply expires _____ months from the mailing date of the final rejection.
 b) ☒ The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a) or (b). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

NOTICE OF APPEAL

2. ☐ The reply was filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing an appeal brief. The Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

AMENDMENTS

3. ☐ The proposed amendment(s) filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because
 (a) ☐ They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);
 (b) ☐ They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);
 (c) ☐ They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or
 (d) ☐ They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: _____. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).

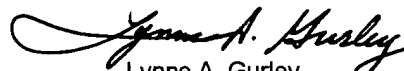
4. ☐ The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).
 5. ☐ Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.
 6. ☐ Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).
 7. ☒ For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): a) ☐ will not be entered, or b) ☒ will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.
 The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:
 Claim(s) allowed: _____.
 Claim(s) objected to: _____.
 Claim(s) rejected: 1-9.
 Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: _____.

AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE

8. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after a final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).
 9. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).
 10. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER

11. ☒ The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because:
See Continuation Sheet.
 12. ☐ Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s). (PTO/SB/08 or PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____.
 13. ☐ Other: _____.


 Lynne A. Gurley
 Primary Patent Examiner
 Art Unit: 2812

Continuation of 11. does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: The Examiner takes the position that the Applicant's limitation in claim 1 calls for a "solution" to remove residual polymer. The broad term "solution" encompasses both organic and inorganic solvents. In Mautz, col. 5, lines 30-47; col. 6, lines 1-24, an inorganic masking layer solvent may be used safely, although at a much slower rate, to attack and remove residual polymer (col. 1, lines 37-50). Mautz clearly does not use ashing alone to remove residual polymer. Mautz' solution cleans the insulating layer 68 by etching it, clearly removing residual polymer which is inherently left behind by the interconnect etching step. Claim 1 does not state from where the residual polymer is removed, so that the residual polymer is not precluded from being removed from the insulating layer instead of from the interconnect. Tsai agrees with Mautz that organic solutions such as alkaline solvents (col. 1, lines 49-60; col. 4, lines 1-13) are damaging for the metal structure. However, Tsai also states that ashing alone does not remove the polymer (col. 3, lines 40-43). A wet stripping step must be taken, and in particular, Tsai offers additional steps in the ashing step which relieve the harmful effects of a wet stripper, whether it is organic, or not. However, Tsai suggests that although an alkaline solvent may be typically used, it is not desirable (col. 4, lines 1-13). So, when taken in combination, both Mautz and Tsai agree that an additional cleaning step is imperative to remove the residual polymer, whether on the insulating layer, or on the interconnect. Both agree that alkaline solvents are harmful, and both aim to solve the same problem, which is to remove residual polymer from the same structure, whether on the insulating layer or on the interconnect. Therefore, the claimed "solution" and steps of the invention are disclosed well within the combination of both references and they are found to be complimentary and supportive of one another.